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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KMCA](#) [GA](#)  
SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: MEETING WITH PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR ON  
HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, MCA

REF: A. BANJUL 297 ET AL

[1](#)B. BANJUL 212

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (B AND D)

[1](#)1. (C) Ambassador met May 18 with President Jammeh's senior advisor, Secretary General Mambury Njie, to stress our ongoing concern over the negative trend in the GOTG's human rights record following the aborted coup plot here March 21 (ref a). Ambassador warned that as a result of this negative trend, coupled with signs of GOTG's slippage on other criteria used in determining eligibility for the Millenium Challenge Account (MCA) program, there was the very real prospect of the The Gambia's MCA eligibility being suspended.

Stating that he expected soon to receive a letter on the matter from MCC to deliver to Jammeh, Ambassador urged the GOTG to act promptly to reverse the negative human rights trend.

[1](#)2. (C) As examples of steps the GOTG might take, he mentioned ensuring full respect for the rights of detainees held in connection with the failed plot, including due process, promptly releasing those against whom there was no clear evidence of wrongdoing, bringing to account any officials responsible for the reported torturing of detainees, and allowing a private journal, "Independent," to resume publication.

[1](#)3. (C) In response, Njie remarked in a resigned tone that he took note of Ambassador's presentation and that suspension of The Gambia's MCA eligibility would be "very regrettable." When Ambassador repeated his urging that the GOTG act promptly to reverse the negative human rights trend, Njie nodded in understanding, but declined to comment further.

[1](#)4. (C) COMMENT: As in previous meetings (c.f.,ref b), Njie indicated that he was aware of the damage caused the GOTG's domestic and international standing by its increasingly poor human rights record in past months, especially following the failed overthrow attempt. At the same time, his resigned tone suggested awareness that getting the irascible Jammeh to authorize prompt GOTG action on our suggested steps to reverse the negative human rights trend would be no easy task. END COMMENT.  
STAFFORD